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ANNOTATIONS

BY

SAM. JOHNSON & GEO. STEEVENS,

AND

THE VARIOUS COMMENTATORS,

UPON THE

MERCHANT of VENICE,

WRITTEN BY

WILL. SHAKSPERE.

——*SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.*

VIRG.

LONDON:

Printed for, and under the Direction of,

JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC LXXXVII.

ANNOTATIONS

UPON THE

MERCHANT of VENICE.

Dramatis Personæ.] In the old editions in quarto, for J. Roberts, 1600, and in the old folio, 1623, there is no enumeration of the persons. It was first made by Mr. Rowe. JOHNSON.

Line 6. *Salanio.*] It is not easy to determine the orthography of this name. In the old editions the owner of it is called—*Salanio*, *Salino*, and *Solanio*.

10. Our author, as Dr. Farmer informs me, took the name of his Jew from an old pamphlet, entitled, "*Caleb Shillocke*, his Prophesie, or the Jewes Prediction." London, printed for T. P. (Thomas Pavyer.) No date. STEEVENS.

14. This character I have restored to the *Personæ Dramatis*. The name appears in the first folio: the description is taken from the quarto. STEEVENS.

Merchant of Venice.] The reader will find a distinct epitome of the novels from which the story of this play is supposed to be taken, prefixed to the play, and at the conclusion of the notes. It should, however, be remembered, that if our poet was at all indebted to the Italian novelist, it must have been through the medium of some old translation, which has hitherto escaped the researches of his most industrious editors.

It appears from a passage in Stephen Gosson's *School of Abuse*, &c. 1579, that a play, comprehending the distinct plots of Shakspere's *Merchant of Venice*, had been exhibited long before he commenced a writer, viz. "The Jew shewn at the Bull, representing the greedinesse of worldly choosers, and the bloody minds of usurers. These plays," says Gosson (for he mentions others with it), "are goode and sweete plays," &c.

The Jew of Malta, by Marlow, neither was performed nor printed till some time after the author's death, which happened in 1593, nor do I know of any other play with the same title. It is therefore not improbable that Shakspere new-wrote his piece, on the model already mentioned, and that the elder performance, being inferior, was permitted to drop silently into oblivion.

This play of Shakspere had been exhibited before the year 1598, as appears from Meres's *Wits Treasury*, where it is mentioned with eleven more of our author's pieces. It was entered on the books of the Stationers-Company, July 22, in the same year. It could

could not have been printed earlier, because it was not yet licensed. The old song of *Gernutes the Jew of Venice*, is published by Dr. Percy in the first volume of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry:* and the ballad, entitled, *The Murtherous lyfe and terrible death of the rich Jewe of Malta*; and the tragedie on the same subject, were both entered on the Stationers' books, May 1594. STEEVENS.

ACT I.

Line 9. ——*argosies*——] IN Ricaut's *Maxims of Turkish Polity*, ch. xiv. it is said, "Those vast carracks called *argosies*, which are so much famed for the vastness of their burthen and bulk, were corruptly so denominated from *Ragosies*," *i. e.* ships of *Ragusa*, a city and territory on the gulf of Venice, tributary to the Porte. If my memory does not fail me, the *Ragusans* lent their last great ship to the king of Spain for the Armada, and it was lost on the coast of Ireland. Shakspere, as Mr. Heath observes, has given the name of *Ragozine* to the pirate in *Measure for Measure*. STEEVENS.

18. *Plucking the grass*, &c.] By holding up the grass, or any light body that will bend by a gentle blast, the direction of the wind is found.

"*This way I used in shooting. Betwixt the markes*

was

was an open place, there I take a fethere, or a lytle grasse, *and so learned how the wind stood.*" Ascham.

JOHNSON.

19. *Prying*——] One of the quartos reads—*peering.* I have followed the other, because it prevents the jingle which, otherwise, occurs in the line.

STEEVENS.

28. ——*Andrew*——] The name of the ship.

JOHNSON.

29. *Vailing her high top lower than her ribs,*] In Bullokar's *English Expository*, 1616, *to vail*, is thus explained: "It means *to put off the hat*, to *strike sail*, to *give sign of submission.*" So, in Stephen Gosson's book, called *Plays confuted in several actions:*

"They might have *vailed* and bended to the king's idol."

Again, in Middleton's *Blurt Master Constable*, 1602: "I'll *vail* my crest to death for her dear sake." Again, in the *Fair Maid of the West*, 1613, by Heywood:

"——it did me good
"To see the Spanish Carveil *vail her top*
"Unto my maiden flag."

A *carvel* is a small vessel. It is mentioned by Raleigh; and I often meet with the word in Jarvis Markham's *English Arcadia*, 1607. STEEVENS.

54. ——*peep through their eyes,*] This gives us a very picturesque image of the countenance in laughing, when the eyes appear half shut. WARBURTON.

57.

57. —*their teeth* in way of smile,] Because such are apt enough to shew their teeth in anger.

WARBURTON.

82. *Let me play the Fool:*] Alluding to the common comparison of human life to a stage play. So that he desires his may be the fool's or buffoon's part, which was a constant character in the old farces; from whence came the phrase, *to play the fool.*

WARBURTON.

91. *There are a sort of men whose visages*
Do cream———] The poet here alludes to the manner in which the film extends itself over milk in scalding; and he had the same appearance in his eye when writing a foregoing line:

"With mirth and laughter let old *wrinkles* come."

So also, the author of *Bussy d'Ambois:*

"Not any *wrinkle creaming* in their faces."

HENLEY.

96. *As who should say*——I am Sir Oracle,] The folio reads:

——I am Sir, *an* oracle. MALONE.

97. ———*let no dog bark!*] This seems to be a proverbial expression. So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529:
"——nor there shall *no dogge barke* at mine ententes."

STEEVENS.

101. ——*would almost* damn *those ears,*] Several old editions have it, *dam, damme,* and *daunt.* Some more correct copies, *damn.* The author's meaning is this: That some people are thought wise whilst they

they keep silence; who, when they open their mouths, are such stupid praters, that the hearers cannot help calling them *fools*, and so incur the judgment denounced in the Gospel. THEOBALD.

107. *I'll end my exhortation after dinner.*] The humour of this consists in its being an allusion to the practice of the puritan preachers of those times; who being generally very long and tedious, were often forced to put off that part of their sermon called the *exhortation*, till after dinner. WARBURTON.

113. *Farewel: I'll grow a talker for this* gear.] *Gear* appears to me to have no meaning here. I would therefore read,

"I'll grow a talker for this *year*"—alluding to what Gratiano has just said:

"Well, keep me company but two *years* more."

MALONE.

116. *Is that any thing* now?] All the old copies read, *is that any thing now?* I suppose we should read, *is that any thing* new? JOHNSON.

The sense of the old reading is,—Does what he has just said amount to any thing, or mean any thing? STEEVENS.

Surely the reading of the old copies is right. Anthonio asks: Is that *any thing* now? and Bassanio answers, that *Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of* nothing ——the greatest part of his discourse is *not any thing*. TYRWHITT.

The first and second folio read, by an apparent error of the press:

It

It is that any thing now.

Mr. Steevens's explanation of the old reading is supported by a passage in *Othello*:

"Can any thing be made of this?" MALONE.

163. —prest *unto it*:——] *Prest* may not here signify *impress'd*, as into military service, but *ready*, *Pret.* Fr. So, in *Cæsar and Pompey*, 1607:

"What must be, must be, Cæsar's *prest* for all."

Again, in *Hans Beer-pot*, &c. 1618:

"——your good word

"Is ever *prest* to do an honest man good."

I could add twenty more instances of the word being used with this signification. STEEVENS.

166. —sometimes *from her eyes*] *Sometimes* is synonymous with *formerly*. Nothing is more frequent in title-pages, than "*some time* fellow of such a college." FARMER.

196. *Superfluity* comes *sooner* by *white hairs*,] *i. e.* Superfluity sooner *acquires* white hairs; becomes old. We still say, How did he *come by* it? MALONE.

209. *But this reasoning is not in the fashion*] Folio.—But this *reason* is not *in fashion*. MALONE.

227. *Ay that's a colt, indeed, for he does nothing but talk of his horse*;] *Colt* is used for a witless, heady, gay youngster, whence the phrase used of an old man too juvenile, that he still retains his *colt's tooth*. See *Henry VIII*. JOHNSON.

232. —*there is the county Palatine*.] I am always inclined to believe, that Shakspere has more allusions to particular facts and persons than his readers com-

monly suppose. The count here mentioned was, perhaps, Albertus a Lasco, a Polish Palatine, who visited England in our author's lifetime, was eagerly caressed, and splendidly entertained; but running in debt, at last stole away, and endeavoured to repair his fortune by enchantment. JOHNSON.

256. ——*he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian*;] A satire on the ignorance of the young English travellers in our author's time. WARBURTON.

264. ——*Scottish lord*,——] Scottish, which is in the quarto, was omitted in the first folio, for fear of giving offence to king James's countrymen.

THEOBALD.

269. *I think the Frenchman became his surety*,] Alluding to the constant assistance, or rather constant promises of assistance, that the French gave the Scots in their quarrels with the English. This alliance is here humorously satirized. WARBURTON.

271. *How like you the young German*, &c.] In Shakspere's time the duke of Bavaria visited London, and was made knight of the garter.

Perhaps in this enumeration of Portia's suitors, there may be some covert allusion to those of queen Elizabeth. JOHNSON.

297. ——*and I pray God grant them a fair departure.*] The folio reads:

——and *I wish them* a fair, &c.

The alteration was probably made in consequence of the stat. 3. Jac. I. cap. 21. MALONE.

398.

308. *How now! what news?*] These words are not in the folio. MALONE.

315. ——condition——] *temper, qualities.* MALONE.

351. ——*the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into.*] Perhaps there is no character through all Shakspere, drawn with more spirit, and just discrimination, than Shylock's. His language, allusions, and ideas, are every where so appropriate to a Jew, that Shylock might be exhibited for an examplar of that peculiar people. HENLEY.

364. *If I can catch him once upon the hip,*] This, Dr. Johnson observes, is a phrase taken from the practice of wrestlers, and (he might have added) is an allusion to the angel's thus laying hold on Jacob, when he wrestled with him. See Gen. xxxii. 24, &c. HENLEY.

368. ——*well* won——] The folio reads well *worn.* MALONE.

382. —*the* ripe wants *of my friend,*] *Ripe wants* are wants *come to the height,* wants that can have no longer delay. Perhaps we might read, *rife wants,* wants that come thick upon him. JOHNSON.

400. —*the* eanlings,——] Lambs just dropt; from *ean, eniti.* MUSGRAVE.

406. ——*of* kind,] *i. e.* of nature. So, Turbervile, in his book of *Falconry,* 1575, p. 127:

"So great is the curtesy of *kind,* as she ever seek-

eth to recompense any defect of hers with some other better benefit."

Again, in Drayton's *Moncalf*:

"————nothing doth so please her mind,
"As to see mares and horses *do their kind*."

COLLINS.

407. ——*the* fulsome *ewes*;] *Fulsome*, I believe in this instance, means lascivious, obscene. The same epithet is bestowed on the night, in *Acolastus his After-Witte*. By S. N. 1600:

"Why shines not Phœbus in the *fulsome* night?"

In the play of *Muleasses the Turk*, Madam *Fulsome* a *Bawd* is introduced. The word, however, sometimes signifies offensive in smell. So, in Chapman's version of the 17th *Book of the Odyssey*. STEEVENS.

420. *This was a way to thrive*, &c.] So, in the ancient song of *Gernutus the Jew of Venice*:

"His wife must lend a shilling,
"For every weeke a penny,
"Yet bring a pledge that is double worth,
"If that you will have any.
"And see, likewise, you keepe your day,
"Or else you lose it all:
"This was the living of the wife,
"Her *cow* she did it call."

Her *cow*, &c. seems to have suggested to Shakspeare Shylock's argument for usury. PERCY.

420. *The devil can cite scripture for his purpose*——] See *Matthew*, iv. 6. HENLEY.

424.

424. *O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!*] I wish any copy would give me authority to range and read the lines thus:

O, what a godly *outside falsehood hath!*
An evil soul producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
Or *goodly apple rotten at the heart.*

Yet there is no difficulty in the present reading. *Falsehood*, which as *truth* means *honesty*, is taken here for *treachery* and *knavery*, does not stand for *falsehood* in general, but for the dishonesty now operating.

JOHNSON.

430. ——*my* usances:] *Use* and *Usance* are both words anciently employ'd for *usury*. So, in the *English Traveller*, 1633:

"Give me my *use*, give me my principal."

Again,

"A toy; the main about five hundred pounds,
"And the *use* fifty."

STEEVENS.

That Mr. Steevens is right respecting the word in the text, will appear from the following quotation: "I knowe a gentleman borne to five hundred pounde lande, did never receyve above a thousand pound of nete money, and within certeyne yeres ronnynge stil upon usurie and double usurie, the *merchants* termyng it *usance* and *double usance*. By a more clenly name he did owe to master usurer five thousand pound at the last, borowyng but one thousande pounde at first, so that his land was clean gone, beynge five hundreth poundes inherytance for one thousand pound in money,

and

and the usurie of the same money for so fewe yeres, and the man now beggeth." *Wylson on Usurye*, 1572, p. 32. REED.

431. *Still I have borne it with a patient shrug*;] So, in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, 1633:

"I learn'd in Florence how to kiss my hand,
"*Heave up my shoulders* when they call me dogge."
MALONE.

434. *And* spit—] The old copies always read *spet*, which spelling is followed by *Milton*:

"———the womb
"Of Stygian darkness *spets* her thickest gloom."
STEEVENS.

455. *A* breed *of* barren *metal of his friend?*] A *breed*, that is, interest money bred from the principal. By the epithet *barren*, the author would instruct us in the argument on which the advocates against usury went, which is this, that money is a *barren* thing, and cannot, like corn and cattle, multiply itself. And to set off the absurdity of this kind of usury, he put *breed* and *barren* in opposition. WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton very truly interprets this passage. Old Meres says, "Usurie and encrease by gold and silver is unlawful, because against nature; nature hath made them *sterill* and *barren*, and usurie makes them *procreative*." FARMER.

The quarto, 1600, printed for J. Heyes, reads—a breed *for*——— STEEVENS.

474. ———*pleaseth me*.] Folio——*it* pleaseth me. MALONE.

478.

478. —*dwell in my necessity.*] To *dwell*, seems in this place to mean the same as to *continue*. To *abide* has both the senses of *habitation* and *continuance*.

JOHNSON.

482. ——*the value of* the *bond.*] Folio—*this* bond.

MALONE.

498. ————*left in the* fearful *guard*, &c.] *Fearful guard*, is a guard that is not to be trusted, but gives cause of fear. To *fear* was anciently to *give* as well as *feel terrours*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Henry IV.* Part I.

"A mighty and a *fearful* head they are."

STEEVENS.

503. *I like not fair terms,*————] Kind words, good language. JOHNSON.

ACT II.

Line 7 *To prove whose blood is reddest, his, or mine.*] To understand how the tawney prince, whose savage dignity is very well supported, means to recommend himself by this challenge, it must be remembered that *red* blood is a traditionary sign of courage: Thus Macbeth calls one of his frighted soldiers, a *lily liver'd* lown; again, in this play, Cowards are said to *have livers as white as milk*; and an effeminate and timorous man is termed a *milksop*. JOHNSON.

I was

I was much stricken at the similiarity of a proposition to this, which was made by a negro slave in Virginia, of whom, to try his acuteness, I had asked, "—How it happened that, as Adam and Eve were white, he, their descendant should be black?"—His reply was: "I don't know: but, prick your hand and prick mine, my *blood* is as *red* as your's."

HENLEY.

9. *Hath* fear'd the *valiant*;——] *i. e. terrify'd.*

STEEVENS.

26. *That slew the Sophy, &c.*] Shakspere seldom escapes well when he is entangled with geography. The prince of Morocco must have travelled far to kill the Sophy of Persia. JOHNSON.

It were well, if Shakspere had never *entangled* himself *with geography* worse than in the present case. If the prince of Morocco be supposed to have served in the army of sultan *Soliman* (*the second*, for instance), I see no *geographical* objection to his having killed the Sophy of Persia. See *D'Herbelot* in *Soliman Ben Selim.*

TYRWHITT.

44. ——*therefore be advis'd.*] Therefore be not precipitate; consider well what you are to do. *Advis'd* is the word opposite to *rash.* JOHNSON.

50. *Enter* LAUNCELOT GOBBO.] The old copies read—*Enter the Clown alone*; and throughout the play this character is called the *Clown* at most of his *entrances* or *exits.* STEEVENS.

57. ——scorn running *with thy heels*.] Launcelot was designed for a wag, but perhaps not for an absurd one.

one. We may therefore suppose, no such expression would have been put in his mouth, as our author had censured in another character. When Pistol says, "he hears with ears," Sir Hugh Evans very properly is made to exclaim, "The tevil and his tam! what phrase is this, *he hears with ears?* why it is affectations." To talk of *running with one's heels*, has scarce less of absurdity. It has been suggested, that we should read and point the passage as follows; "Do not run; scorn running; *withe* thy heels;" *i. e.* connect them with a *withe* (a band made of osiers), as the legs of cattle are hampered in some countries to prevent their straggling far from home. The Irishman in *Sir John Oldcastle* petitions to be hanged in a *withe*; and Chapman has the following passage:

"———There let him lie
"Till I, of cut-up osiers, did imply,
"A *with* a fathom long, with which his feete
"I made together in a sure league meete."

STEEVENS.

84. ———*try conclusions*] So the old quarto. The first folio, by a mere blunder, reads, try *confusions*, which, because it makes a kind of paultry jest, has been copied by all the editors. JOHNSON.

To *try conclusions* is to try experiments. So, in Heywood's *Golden Age*, 1611:

"———since favour
"Cannot attain thy love, I'll *try conclusions*."

Again, in the *Lancashire Witches*, 1634:

"Nay then I'll *try conclusions*;
"Mare, Mare, see thou be,
"And where I point thee, carry me."

STEEVENS.

88. *Turn up on your right hand*, &c.] This arch and perplexed direction to puzzle the inquirer, seems to imitate that of Syrus to Demea in the *Brothers* of Terence:

"——*ubi eas præterieris*,
"*Ad* sinistram *hac* recta *platea: ubi ad Dianæ veneris*,
"*Ito ad* dextram: *prius quam ad portam venias*," &c.

WARBURTON.

92. ——*God sonties*,——] I know not exactly of what oath this is a corruption. I meet with *God's santy* in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635.

Again, in *The longer thou liv'st the more Fool thou art*, a comedy, bl. let. without date:

"*God's sainte*, this is a goodly book indeed."

Perhaps it was once customary to swear by the *santé*, i. e. *health*, of the Supreme Being, or by his saints. Oaths of such a turn are not unfrequent among our ancient writers. All, however, seem to have been so thoroughly convinced of the crime of prophane swearing, that they were content to disguise their meaning by abbreviations, which were permitted silently to terminate in irremediable corruptions. STEEVENS.

103. *Your worship's friend, and* Launcelot, *sir*,] Dr. Farmer is of opinion we should read *Gobbo* instead of *Launcelot*. It may be inferred from the name of

of *Gobbo*, that Shakspere designed this character to be represented with a *hump-back*. STEEVENS.

143. ——*my* thill-horse——] *Thill* or *fill*, means the shafts of a cart or waggon. So, in *A Woman never Vex'd*, 1632:

"——I will
"Give you the fore-horse place, and I will be
"I' the *fills*."

Again, in *Fortune by Land and Sea*, 1655, by Tho. Heywood and W. Rowley: "——acquaint you with Jock the fore-horse, and Fibb the *fil-horse*," &c. STEEVENS.

The two first folios read *phil*-horse. So also the word is spelled in the two instances produced by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

203. ——*more* guarded——] *i. e.* more ornamented. STEEVENS.

205. *Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer* table, *which doth offer to swear upon a book,*] *Table* was the chiromantick term for the lines of the hand. So, Ben Jonson in his *Mask of Gipsies*, to the lady Elizabeth Hatton:

"*Mistress of a* fairer table,
"*Hath not history, nor fable.*" WARBURTON.

Launcelot congratulates himself upon his dexterity and good fortune, and, in the height of his rapture, inspects his hand, and congratulates himself upon the felicities in his table. The act of expanding his hand puts him in mind of the action in which the palm is shewn, by raising it to lay it on the book, in judicial

attestations. *Well*, says he, *if any man in Italy have a fairer table, that doth offer to swear upon a book*—— Here he stops with an abruptness very common, and proceeds to particulars. JOHNSON.

212. ——*in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed*;—] A cant phrase to signify the danger of marrying.——A certain French writer uses the same kind of figure, "*O mon Ami, j'aimerois mieux être tombée sur* la point d'un Oreiller, *&* m' être rompû le Cou."— WARBURTON.

235. *Something too liberal*;——] Liberal I have already shewn to be mean, gross, coarse, licentious. JOHNSON.

244. ——hood *mine eyes*] Alluding to the manner of covering a hawk's eyes. So, in the *Tragedy of Cræsus*, 1604:

"And like a *hooded* hawk," &c. STEEVENS.

247. ——*sad ostent*] Grave appearance; shew of staid and serious behaviour. JOHNSON.

Ostent is a word very commonly used for *show* among the old dramatick writers. So, in Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632:

"——you in those times
"Did not affect *ostent*."

Again, in Chapman's translation of *Homer*, edit. 1598, B. 6.

"——did bloodie vapours raine
"For *sad ostent*," &c. STEEVENS.

284. —*torch-bearers*.] See the note in *Romeo and Juliet*, act i. sc. 4. We have not *spoke us yet*, &c. i. e.

i. e. *we have not yet bespoke us*, &c. Thus the old copies. It may, however, mean, we have not as yet consulted on the subject of torch-bearers. Mr. Pope reads—" spoke *as* yet." STEEVENS.

290. —to break up *this*,] To *break up* was a term in carving. STEEVENS.

336. ———*to feed upon*
The prodigal Christian.———] Shylock forgets his resolution. In a former scene he declares he will neither *eat*, *drink*, nor *pray* with Christians. Of this circumstance the poet was aware, and meant only to heighten the malignity of the character, by making him depart from his most settled resolve, for the prosecution of his revenge. STEEVENS.

345. ——*then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on* Black-Monday *last*,——] " *Black-Monday* is a moveable day; it is *Easter-Monday*, and was so called on this occasion: In the 34th of Edward III. (1360) the 14th of April, and the morrow after Easter-day, king Edward, with his host, lay before the city of Paris; which day was full dark of mist and hail, and so bitter cold, that many men died on their horses' backs with the cold. Wherefore, unto this day, it hath been called the *Blacke-Monday*." Stowe, p. 264—6. GREY.

It appears from a passage in Lodge's *Rosalynde*, 1592, that some superstitious belief was annexed to the accident of *bleeding at the nose:* " As he stood gazing, *his nose on a sudden bled*, which made him conjecture it was some friend of his." STEEVENS.

Again,

Again, in *The Duchess of Malsy*, 1640, act i. sc. 2.

"How superstitiously we mind our evils?
"The throwing downe salt, or crossing of a hare,
"*Bleeding at nose*, the stumbling of a horse,
"Or singing of a creket, are of power
"To daunt whole man in us." REED.

351. *Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,*
And the vile squeaking of the wry-neck'd fife,]

Pimâ nocte domum claude; neque in vias
Sub cantu querulæ despice tibiæ.

Hor. Lib. III. Od. 7.

MALONE.

352. —*the vile* squeaking——] The folio and one of the quartos read *squealing*. STEVENS.

364. *There will come a Christian by,*
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.] *It's worth a Jew's eye*, is a proverbial phrase. WHALLEY.

368. *The* patch *is kind enough*;——] This term came into use from the name of a celebrated fool. This I learn from Wilson's *Art of Rhetorique*, 1553: "A word-making, called of the Grecians Onomatopeia, is when we make words of our own mind, such as be derived from the nature of things—As to call one *Patche*, or Cowlson, whom we see to do a thing foolishly; because these two in their times were notable fools."

Probably the dress which the celebrated *Patch* wore, was in allusion to his name, patched or particoloured. Hence the stage fool has ever since been exhibited in a motley

motley coat. In Rowley's *When you see me you know me*, or *History of K. Henry VIII.* 1632, Cardinal Wolsey's fool *Patch* is introduced. Perhaps he was the original *Patch* of whom Wilson speaks.

MALONE.

394. ——*a younker*,——] All the old copies read *a younger*. STEEVENS.

How like a younker or a prodigal,
The sharfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like a prodigal doth she return;
With over-weather'd ribbs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!]

Mr. Gray (dropping the particularity of allusion to the parable of the prodigal) seems to have caught from this passage the imagery of the following:

"Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows,
"While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
"In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes;
"Youth on the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;
"Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
"That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

The *grim repose* however, was suggested by Thomson's

"—deep fermenting tempest brew'd
"In the *grim* evening sky. HENLEY.

397. ——*doth* she *return*;] Surely the bark ought to be of the *masculine* gender, otherwise the allusion wants somewhat of propriety. This indiscriminate use

use of the personal for the neuter, at least obscures the passage. A ship, however, is commonly spoken of in the feminine gender. STEEVENS.

398. *With over* weather'd *ribs,*——] The first and second folio read,

With over *wither'd* ribs. MALONE.

432. ——*a* Gentile, *and no Jew.*] A jest arising from the ambiguity of *Gentile,* which signifies both a *Heathen,* and *one well-born.* JOHNSON.

So at the conclusion of the first part of *Hieronimo,* &c. 1605:

"——So, good night kind *gentles,*

"For I hope there's never a *Jew* among you all."

Again, in *Swetnam Arraign'd,* 1620:

"Joseph the *Jew* was a better *Gentile* far."

STEEVENS.

A Gentile, *and no Jew.*] Dr. Johnson rightly explains this. There is an old book by one Ellis, entitled, "The *Gentile Sinner,* or *England's brave Gentleman.* FARMER.

457. —*as blunt;*] That is, as gross as the dull metal. JOHNSON.

506. ——insculp'd *upon;*] To *insculp* is to engrave. So, in *Woman never Vex'd,* 1632:

"——in golden text

Shall be *insculp'd.*"—— STEEVENS.

The meaning is, that the figure of the angel is raised or embossed on the coin, not engraved on it. M. C. T.

529.

529. ——*chuse me so.*] The old quarto edition of 1600 has no distribution of acts, but proceeds from the beginning to the end in an unbroken tenour. This play therefore having been probably divided without authority by the publishers of the first folio, lies open to a new regulation, if any more commodious division can be proposed. The story is itself so wildly incredible, and the changes of the scene so frequent and capricious, that the probability of action does not deserve much care; yet it may be proper to observe, that, by concluding the second act here, time is given for Bassanio's passage to Belmont.

JOHNSON.

557. *I* reason'd *with a Frenchman yesterday*;] *i. e.* I conversed. So, in *King John:*

"Our griefs, and not our manners *reason* now."

Again, in Chapman's translation of the fourth book of the *Odyssey:*

"The morning shall yield time to you and me,
"To do what fits, and reason mutually."

STEEVENS.

569. Slubber *not*——] To *slubber* is to do any thing carelesly, imperfectly. So, in Nash's *Lenten Stuff*, &c. 1599:

"——they *slubber'd* thee over so negligently."

STEEVENS.

572. —*your mind of love:*] So all the copies, but I suspect some corruption. JOHNSON.

This imaginary corruption is removed by only putting a comma after *mind.* LANGTON.

Of love, is an adjuration sometimes used by Shakspere. So, *Merry Wives*, act ii. sc. 2.

"*Quick.* —— desires you to send her your little page, of *all loves*:" *i. e.* she desires you to send him *by all means*.

Your mind of love may, however, in this instance, mean—*your loving mind*. So, in the *Tragedie of Crœsus*, 1604: "A *mind of treason* is a *treasonable mind*.

"Those that speak freely, have no *mind of treason*." STEEVENS.

582. ——embraced *heaviness*] We say of a man now, *that he* hugs *his sorrows*; and why might not Anthonio *embrace heaviness?* JOHNSON.

So, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, sc. 1.

"You *embrace* your charge too willingly."

Again, in this play of the *Merchant of Venice*, act iii. sc. 2.

"——doubtful thoughts and rash-*embrac'd* despair." STEEVENS.

602. *And so have I addrest me:*——] To *address* is to *prepare*. The meaning is, I have prepared myself by the same ceremonies. STEEVENS.

I believe we should read,

"And so have I. *Address* me, Fortune, now,
"To my heart's hope!"

So, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act iii. scene the last, Falstaff says,

"——I will then *address me to* my appointment." TYRWHITT.

613.

613. —*in the force*——] *i. e.* the power.

STEEVENS.

629. *How much low pleasantry would then be gleaned*
From the true seed of honour?——] The meaning is, *How much meanness would be found among the great, and how much greatness among the mean.*

JOHNSON.

652. —*I* wis,] I know. *Wisten*, German. So, in Shakspere's *Henry VI.*

"I *wis* your grandame had no worser match."

Again, in the comedy of king *Cambyses*:

"Yea I *wis* shall you, and that with all speed."

Ascham and *Waller* both use the word. STEEVENS.

654. *Take what wife you will to bed,*] Perhaps the poet had forgotten that he who missed Portia was never to marry any woman. JOHNSON.

662. ——*to bear my* wroth.] The old editions read—"to bear my *wroath*." *Wroath* is used in some of the old books for *misfortune*; and is often spelt like *ruth*, which at present signifies only *pity*, or *sorrow for the miseries of another*. The modern editors read—my *wrath*. STEEVENS.

674. ——*regreets*;] *i. e.* salutations. So, in *King John*, act iii. sc. 1.

"Unyoke this seizure, and this kind *regreet*."

STEEVENS.

ACT III.

Line 9. —KNAPT *ginger,*——] To *knap* is to break short. The word occurs in the *Psalms.* STEEVENS.

41. ——*a bankrupt, a prodigal,*] There could be, in Shylock's opinion, no prodigality more culpable than such liberality as that by which a man exposes himself to ruin for his friend. JOHNSON.

117. ——*it was my* turquoise, *I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor :*] A *turquoise* is a precious stone found in the veins of the mountains on the confines of Persia to the east, subject to the Tartars. As Shylock had been married long enough to have a daughter grown up, it is plain he did not value this turquoise on account of the money for which he might hope to sell it, but merely in respect of the imaginary virtues formerly ascribed to the stone. It was said of the Turkey-stone, that it faded or brightened in its colour, as the health of the wearer increased or abated.

To this Ben Jonson refers, in his *Sejanus :*

"And true as *Turkise,* in my dear lord's ring,
"Look well or ill with him."

Again, in the *Muses Elysium,* by Drayton:

"The *turkesse,* which who haps to wear,
"Is often kept from peril."

Again, Edward Fenton in *Secrete Wonders of Nature,* bl. let. 4to. 1569 : "The *Turkeys* doth move when there

there is any perill prepared to him that weareth it." P. 51. b.

But *Leah* (if we may believe Thomas Nicols, some time of Jesus College in Cambridge, in his *Lapidary*, &c.) might have presented *Shylock* with his *Turquoise* for a better reason; as this stone "is likewise said to take away all enmity, and to reconcile man and wife." STEEVENS.

147. *And so though yours, not yours.—Prove it so,*] It may be more grammatically read:

And so though yours I'm *not yours.* JOHNSON.

148. *Let fortune go to hell for it—not I,*] This line is very obscure. The meaning is, "If the worst I fear should happen, and it should prove in the event that I, who am justly yours by the free donation I have made you of myself, should yet not be yours in consequence of an unlucky choice, let fortune go to hell for robbing you of your just due, not I for violating my oath." REVISAL.

149. ——*to* peize *the time*;] Thus the old copies. To *peize* is from *peser*, Fr. So, in *K. Richard III.*

"Lest leaden slumber *peize* me down to-morrow."

To *peize the time*, therefore, is *to retard it by hanging weights upon it.* All the modern editors read, without authority,—*piece.* STEEVENS.

To *peize*, is to *weigh*, or *balance*; and figuratively, *to keep in suspence*, to *delay*.

Thus, in Sir P. Sydney's *Apology for Poetry*:—"not speaking words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but *peyzing* each sillable." HENLEY.

183.

183. *With no less presence,——*] With the same *dignity of mein.* JOHNSON.

190. *Live thou, I live:—With much much more dismay,*
I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.] One of the quartos reads,
Live then, I live with much more dismay
To view the fight, than, &c.
The folio, 1623, thus:
Live thou, I live with much more dismay
I view the fight, than, &c.
The other quartos give the present reading. JOHNSON.

195. *Reply.*] These words, *reply, reply,* were in all the late editions, except Sir T. Hanmer's, put as a verse in the song, but in all the old copies stand as a marginal direction. JOHNSON.

201. *So may the outward shows——*] He begins abruptly, the first part of the argument has passed in his mind. JOHNSON.

204. *—gracious voice,*] Pleasing; winning favour. JOHNSON.

217. *——by the weight;*] That is, *artificial beauty* is purchased so; as false hair, &c. STEEVENS.

220. *—crisped—*] *i. e.* curled. STEEVENS.

224. *——in the sepulchre.*] See a note on *Timon of Athens,* act iv. sc. 3. Shakspere has likewise satirized this yet prevailing fashion in *Love's Labour's Lost.* STEEVENS.

225. ——*the* guiled *shore*] *i. e.* the *treacherous* shore. I should not have thought the word wanted explanation, but that some of our modern editors have rejected it, and read *gilded*. *Guiled* is the reading of all the ancient copies. STEEVENS.

227. ——*Indian beauty*;——] Sir Tho. Hanmer reads,

——*Indian dowdy*. JOHNSON.

234. *Thy* plainness *moves me more than eloquence*:] Former editions had

Thy paleness *moves me more than eloquence*:

The word *plainness* characterizes the lead from the silver, which *paleness* does not, they being both *pale*. Besides, there is a beauty in the antithesis between *plainness* and *eloquence*; between *paleness* and *eloquence* none. So it is said before of the *leaden casket*:

This third, dull lead, with warning all is blunt.

WARBURTON.

It may be that Dr. Warburton has altered the wrong word, if any alteration be necessary. I would rather give the character of *silver*,

" ——Thou *stale*, and common drudge
" 'Tween man and man."——

The *paleness* of *lead* is for ever alluded to.

" Diane declining, *pale* as any *lodde*."

Says *Stephen Hawes*. In *Fairfax's Tasso*, we have

" The lord Tancredie, *pale* with rage as *lead*."

Again, Sackville, in his *Legend of the duke of Buckingham*:

" Now

"Now *pale* as *lead*, now cold as any stone."

And in the old ballad of the *King and the Beggar*:

"————She blushed scarlet red,

"Then straight again, as *pale* as *lead*."

As to the antithesis, Shakspere has already made it in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"When (says Theseus) I have seen great clerks look *pale*,

"I read as much, as from the rattling tongue

"Of saucy and audacious *eloquence*." FARMER.

240. *In measure rain thy joy,*——] The first quarto edition reads,

In measure range *thy joy*.

The folio, and one of the quartos:

In measure raine *thy joy*.

I once believ'd Shakspere meant:

In measure rein *thy joy*.

The words *rain* and *rein* were not in these times distinguished by regular orthography. There is no difficulty in the present reading, only, where the copies vary, some suspicion of error is always raised.

JOHNSON.

I believe Shakspere alluded to the well-known proverb, *It cannot rain, but it pours*.

So, in the *Laws of Candy*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"——pour not too fast joys on me,

"But sprinkle them so gently, I may stand them."

Mr. Tollet is of opinion that *rein* is the true word, as it better agrees with the context; and more especially

cially on account of the following passage in *Coriolanus*, which approaches very near to the present reading:

" ——being once chaf'd, he cannot
" Be *rein'd* again to temperance."

So, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, act v. sc. 2.

" *Rein* thy tongue." STEEVENS.

244. *Fair Portia's* counterfeit?——] *Counterfeit*, which is at present used only in a bad sense, anciently signified a *likeness*, a *resemblance*, without comprehending any idea of fraud. So, in *The Wit of a Woman*, 1604: " I will see if I can agree with this stranger, for the drawing of my daughter's *counterfeit*." STEEVENS.

254. *Methinks, it should have pow'r to steal both his,*
And leave itself unfurnish'd:——] I know not how *unfinish'd* has intruded without notice into the later editions, as the quartos and folio have *unfurnish'd*, which Sir Thomas Hanmer has received. Perhaps it might be:

And leave himself *unfurnish'd.* JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's emendation would altogether subvert the poet's meaning. If the artist, in painting *one* of Portia's eyes, should lose both his own, that eye which he had painted, must necessarily be *left unfurnished*, or destitute of its fellow. HENLEY.

274. —*peals*——] The second 4to. reads, *pearles* of praise. JOHNSON.

This reading may be the true one. So, in Whetstone's *Arbour of Virtue*, 1576:

"The *pearles of praise* that deck a noble name." Again, in R. C.'s verses in praise of the same author's *Rock of Regard :*

"But that that bears the *pearle of praise* away."

STEEVENS.

287. *Is* sum *of something* ;—] Thus one of the quartos. The folio reads,

Is sum of nothing.———

The purport of the reading in the text seems to be this :

———the full *sum* of me

is sum of nothing, *i. e.* is not entirely ideal, but amounts to as much as can be found in—*an unlesson'd girl*, &c. STEEVENS.

320. ——*you can wish none from me :*] That is, none *away from* me ; none that I shall lose, if you gain it.

JOHNSON.

328. ———*for* intermission] *Intermission* is *pause, intervening time, delay*. So, in *Macbeth :*

"———gentle heaven
Cut short all *intermission !*" STEEVENS.

471. ———*so fond*] *i. e.* so foolish. STEEVENS.

476. ———dull-ey'd *fool,*] This epithet, *dull-ey'd*, is bestow'd on *melancholy* in *Pericles Prince of Tyre.*

STEEVENS.

490. *The duke cannot deny*, &c.—] As the reason here given seems a little perplex'd, it may be proper to explain it. If, says he, the duke stop the course of law, it will be attended with this inconvenience, that stranger

stranger merchants, by whom the wealth and power of this city is supported, will cry out of injustice. For the known stated law being their guide and security, they will never bear to have the current of it stopped on any pretence of equity whatsoever.

WARBURTON.

513. *Whose souls do bear an* equal *yoke*, &c.] The folio 1623, reads *egal*, which I believe in Shakspere's time was commonly used for *equal*. So it was in Chaucer's:

"I will presume hym so to dignifie
"Yet be not *egall*."

Prol. to the *Remedy of Love*.

Again, in *Gorboduc*:

"Sith all as one do bear you *egall* faith."

STEEVENS.

515. *Of lineaments, of manners*, &c.] The poet means to say, *that corresponding proportions of body and mind are necessary for those who spend their time together*. So, in *K. Henry IV.* Part II:

"*Dol.* Why doth the prince love him so then?
"*Fal.* Because *their legs are both of a bigness*," &c.

Every one will allow that the friend of a toper should have a strong head, and the intimate of a sportsman such an athletick constitution as will enable him to acquit himself with reputation in the exercises of the field. The word *lineaments* was used with great laxity by our ancient writers. In *The learned and true As-*

sertion of the Original Life, &c. of King Arthur, translated from the Latin of John Leland, 1582, it is used for the human frame in general. Speaking of the removal of that prince's bones—he calls them *Arthur's* lineaments *three times translated*; and again, *all the* lineaments *of them remaining in that most stately tomb, saving the shin bones of the king and queen*, &c.

Again, in Green's *Farewell to Follie*, 1617: "Nature had so curiously performed his charge in the *lineaments* of his body," &c.

Again, in Chapman's translation of the twenty-third book of *Homer's Iliad:*

"———so over labour'd were
"His goodly *lineaments* with chase of Hector," &c. STEEVENS.

564. *With* what *we lack.*——] The first folio reads, With *that* we lack. MALONE.

565. *When we are both* apparell'd, &c.] The folio has "*accoutered.*" MALONE.

589. ———*therefore, I promise you, I fear you.*] I suspect *far* has been inadvertently omitted; and we should read—I fear *far* you. MALONE.

602. ——*thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother:*] Alluding to the well-known line of a modern Latin poet, Philippe Gualtier, in his poem entitled *L'Alexandreis:*

"Incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim."
MALONE.

Shakspere might have met with a translation of this line in many places. Among others in *A Dialogue*

logue between Custom and Veretie, concerning the use and abuse of Dauncing and Minstrelsie, bl. let. no date:

"While *Silla* they do seem to shun,
"In *Charibd* they do fall," &c. STEEVENS.

605. *I shall be saved by my husband*;] From St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* vii. 14.

"The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband." HENLEY.

626. *It is much, that the* Moor *should be* more, &c.] This reminds us of the quibbling epigram of Milton, which has the same kind of humour to boast of:

"*Galli* ex concubitu gravidam te *Pontia Mori*,
"Quis bene *moratam morigeram* que negat?"

So, in the *Fair Maid of the West*, 1615:

"And for you *Moors* thus much I mean to say,
"I'll see if *more* I eat the *more* I may."

STEEVENS.

635. *Goodly lord*,—] Surely this should be corrected *Good lord!* as it is in Theobald's edition.

TYRWHITT.

649. ——*how his words are suited!*] I believe the meaning is: What a *series* or *suite* of *words* he has independent of meaning; how one word draws on another without relation to the matter. JOHNSON.

ACT

ACT IV.

Line 11. ——*His* envy's *reach*,—] *Envy* in this place means *hatred* or *malice*. So, in Reynold's *God's Revenge against Murder*, 1621: "——he never looks on her (his wife) with affection, but *envy*." p. 109. edit. 1679. STEEVENS.

22. —*apparent*—] That is, *seeming*; not real. JOHNSON.

23. ——*where*——] For *whereas*. JOHNSON.

30. *Enough to press a royal merchant down*,] We are not to imagine the word *royal* to be only a ranting sounding epithet. It is used with great propriety, and shews the poet well acquainted with the history of the people whom he here brings upon the stage. For when the French and the Venetians, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, had won Constantinople, the French, under the emperor Henry, endeavoured to extend their conquests into the provinces of the Grecian empire on the Terra Firma; while the Venetians, who were masters of the sea, gave liberty to any subjects of the republick, who would fit out vessels, to make themselves masters of the isles of the Archipelago, and other maritime places; and to enjoy their conquests in sovereignty; only doing homage to the republick for their several principalities. By virtue of this licence, the Sanudos, the Justiniani, the Grimaldi, the Summaripos, and others, all Venetian *merchants*,

merchants, erected principalities in several places of the Archipelago (which their descendants enjoyed for many generations), and thereby became truly and properly *royal merchants*. Which indeed was the title generally given them all over Europe. Hence, the most eminent of our own merchants (while publick spirit resided amongst them, and before it was aped by faction) were called *royal merchants*.

WARBURTON.

This epithet was in our poet's time more striking and better understood, because Gresham was then commonly dignified with the title of the *royal merchant*.

JOHNSON.

Even the pulpit did not disdain the use of this phrase. I have now before me "The *Merchant Royal*, a Sermon, preached at Whitehall, before the king's majestie, at the nuptialls of the right honourable the Lord Hay and his lady, upon the twelfe day last, being Jan. 6, 1607." STEEVENS.

43. ——*I'll* not *answer that:*

But, say, it is my humour;——] The Jew being asked a question which the law does not require him to answer, stands upon his right, and refuses; but afterwards gratifies his own malignity by such answers as he knows will aggravate the pain of the inquirer. I will not answer, says he, as to a legal or serious question; but, since you want an answer, will this serve you? JOHNSON.

48. ——*a gaping pig;*] So, in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, 1623:

"He

"He could not abide to see a *pig's head gaping*;
"I thought your grace would find him out a Jew."

Again, in the *Mastive, &c.* or, *A Collection of Epigrams and Satires:*

"Darkas cannot endure to see a cat,
"A breast of mutton, or a *pig's head gaping*."

STEEVENS.

Some men there are, love not a *gaping pig*;
Some that are mad, *&c.*

By a *gaping* pig, Shakspere, I believe, meant a pig prepared for the table; for in that state is the epithet, *gaping*, most applicable to this animal. A passage in one of Nashe's pamphlets (which, perhaps, furnished our author with his instance), may serve to confirm the observation: "The causes conducting unto wrath are as diverse as the actions of a man's life. Some will take on like a madman, if they see a *pig come to the table*. Sotericus the surgeon was cholerick at the sight of sturgeon," &c.

Pierce Pennyless his Supplications to the Devil, 1595.

MALONE.

51. *Cannot contain their urine,*] Mr. Rowe reads:

Cannot contain their urine for affection.
Masterless passion *sways it to the mood*
Of what it likes or loaths.

Masterless passion Mr. Pope has since copied. I don't know what word there is to which this relative *it* is to be referred. Dr. Thirlby would thus adjust the passage:

Cannot

Cannot contain their urine; for affection,
Master *of passion, sways* it, *&c.*

And then *it* is govern'd of *passion:* and the two old quartos and folios read——Masters *of passion,* &c.

It may be objected, that *affection* and *passion* mean the same thing. But I observe, the writers of our author's age made a distinction: as Jonson in Sejanus:

"——*He hath studied*
"Affection's passions, *knows their springs and ends.*"

And then, in this place, *affection* will stand for that *sympathy* or *antipathy* of soul, by which we are provok'd to shew a *liking* or *disgust* in the working of our *passions.* THEOBALD.

Masterless passion sways it to the mood] The two old quartos and folio read,

MASTERS OF *passion.*

And this is certainly right. He is speaking of the power of sound over the human affections, and concludes, very naturally, that the *masters of passion* (for so he finely calls the musicians) sway the passions or affections as they please. Alluding to what the ancients tell us of the feats that Timotheus and other musicians worked by the power of musick. Can any thing be more natural? WARBURTON.

Does not the verb *sway,* which governs the two nominative cases *affection* and *masters,* require that both should be plural? and consequently direct us to read thus:

For *affections*, *masters* of passion, sway it, &c.

Sir JOHN HAWKINS.

That *affections* and *passions* anciently had different significations, may be known from the following instance in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616:

"His heart was fuller of *passions* than his eyes of *affections*."

Affections, as used by Shylock, seem to signify *imaginations*, or *prejudices*. In *Othello*, act i. is a passage somewhat similar. "And though we have here a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet *opinion*, a *sovereign mistress of effects*, throws a more safe voice on you."

STEEVENS.

As for *affection*, those that know how to operate upon the passions of men, rule it by making it operate in obedience to the notes which please or disgust it.

JOHNSON.

Of this much controverted passage, my opinion was formerly very different from what it is at present. *Sways*, the reading of the old copies, I conceived could not agree with *masters* as a substantive; but very soon after my former note on this subject was printed, I found that this was not only our author's usual phraseology, but the common language of the times. There is therefore, I think, no other alteration necessary here, but that which has been made in almost every page of these plays; the reducing the substantive and the verb to concord, and reading *sway*.

Cannot contain their urine for *affection*,

(for

(for so the old copies all read, not *affections*, as the word has been printed in the modern editions, in order to connect it with the following line) I believe, means only—Cannot contain, &c. on account of their being *affected* by the noise of the bag-pipe. In the next line, which appears to me to be put in apposition with that preceding, *it* may refer either to *passion* or *affection*. The masters of passion, those who know how to operate on the passion of men, rule it [or rule the sympathetick feeling] by making it operate, &c. as Dr. Johnson has already explained the words.

MALONE.

The author of THE REMARKS says, that the reading of all the old editions is,

And others, when the bag-pipe sings i' th' nose,
Cannot contain their urine for *affection*.
Masters of passion sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loaths.

And he explains the passage thus: *some men when they hear the sound of a bag-pipe, are* so affected therewith *that they cannot retain their urine. For those things which are masters over passion, make it like or loath whatever they will.* REED.

57. *Why he, a woollen* bag-pipe;—] This incident Shakspere seems to have taken from J. C. Scaliger's *Exot. Exercit.* against Cardan. A book that our author was well read in, and much indebted for a great deal of his physicks: it being then much in vogue, and indeed is excellent, though now long since forgot. In his 344 *Exercit.* sect. 6. he has these words: "*Narrabo*

rabo nunc tibi jocosam Sympathiam *Reguli Vasconis equitis. Is dum viveret, audito phormingis sono, urinam illico facere cogebatur.*"—And to make this jocular story still more ridiculous, Shakspere, I suppose, translated *phorminx* by *bag-pipes*. But what I would chiefly observe from hence is this, that as Scaliger uses the word *Sympathiam*, which signifies, and so he interprets it, *communem* AFFECTIONEM *duabus rebus*, so Shakspere translates it by AFFECTION:

Cannot contain their urine for AFFECTION.

Which shews the truth of the preceding emendation of the text according to the old copies; which have a full stop at *affection*, and read *Masters of passion*.

WARBURTON.

In an old translation from the French of Peter de Loier, entitled *A Treatise of Spectres, or Strange Sights, Visions*, &c. we have this identical story from Scaliger; and what is still more, a marginal note gives us, in all probability, the very fact alluded to, as well as the *word* of Shakspere. "Another gentleman of this quality lived of late in Devon, neere Excester, who could not endure the playing on a *bag-pipe*." We may justly add, as some observation has been made upon it, that *affection* in the sense of *sympathy*, was formerly *technical*; and so used by lord Bacon, Sir K. Digby, and many other writers. FARMER.

Woollen bag-pipe;] As all the editors agree with complete uniformity in this reading, I can hardly forbear to imagine that they understood it. But I never saw a *woollen bag-pipe*, nor can well conceive it. I suppose the

the author wrote *wooden* bag-pipe, meaning that the bag was of leather, and the pipe of *wood*.

JOHNSON.

This passage is clear from all difficulty, if we read *swelling* or *swollen bag-pipe*, which, that we should, I have not the least doubt. Sir J. HAWKINS.

Woollen is used as a term of contempt in *Coriolanus*, who says, act iii. sc. 2. his mother used to call the plebeians *woollen* vassals; and yet I think the same epithet hardly applicable to the bag-pipe. A passage on *Turbervile's Epitaphes*, p. 13. supports the emendation proposed:

"First came the rustick forth
"With pipe and *puffed* bag."

This instance was pointed out to me by Dr. Farmer.

STEEVENS.

71. —*you* question, *&c.*] To question is to converse. So, in *Measure for Measure:*

"—in the loss of *question*—" *i. e.* conversation that leads to nothing. To *reason* had anciently the same meaning. STEEVENS.

91. ——*many a purchas'd slave,*] This argument, considered as used to the particular persons, seems conclusive. I see not how Venetians or Englishmen, while they practise the purchase and sale of slaves, can much enforce or demand the law of *doing to others as we would that they should do to us.* JOHNSON.

106. ———*Bellario, a learned doctor,*
Whom I have sent for————] The doctor and the court are here somewhat unskillfully brought together.

together. That the duke would, on such an occasion, consult a doctor of great reputation, is not unlikely; but how should this be foreknown by Portia?

JOHNSON.

I do not see any necessity for supposing that *this* was *foreknown by Portia*. She consults Bellario as an eminent lawyer, and her relation. If the duke had not consulted him, the only difference would have been, that she would have come into court as an advocate, perhaps, instead of a judge. TYRWHITT.

125. *Not on thy soal, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,*] This lost jingle Mr. Theobald found again; but knew not what to make of it when he had it, as appears by his paraphrase, *Though thou thinkest that thou art whetting thy knife on the soal of thy shoe, yet it is upon thy soul, thy immortal part.* Absurd! the conceit is, that his soul was so hard that it had given an edge to his knife. WARBURTON.

128. *Of thy sharp* envy.——] *Envy* again, in this place, signifies *hatred* or *malice*. STEEVENS.

130. ———inexorable *dog!*] All the copies read, *inexecrable*. The emendation in the third folio.

STEEVENS.

144. *To* cureless *ruin.*—] Both the folios read, To *endless* ruin. MALONE.

181. *Cannot* impugn *you,*——] To impugn is to oppose, to controvert. So, in the *Tragedy of Darius*, 1603:

"Yet though my heart would fain *impugn* my word."

Again,

Again,

"If any press t' *impugn* what I impart."

STEEVENS.

182. *You stand* within his danger,——] So, in the *Corvysor's Play*, among the collection of Whitsun Mysteries represented at Chester. See MS. Harl. 2013, p. 106:

"Two detters some tyme there were
"Oughten money to an usurere,
"The one was *in his daungere*
"Fyve hundred poundes tolde." STEEVENS.

There are frequent instances in the *Paston Letters* of the use of this phrase in the same sense; whence it is obvious, from the common language of the time, that *to be in* DEBT and *to be in* DANGER, were synonimous terms. HENLEY.

203. ——*in the course of justice, none of us*
Should see salvation:——] Portia referring the *Jew* to the Christian doctrine of salvation, and the Lord's Prayer, is a little out of character.

BLACKSTONE.

210. *My deeds upon my head!*——] An imprecation adopted from that of the Jews to Pilate: "His blood be on us, and our children!" HENLEY.

218. *Malice bears down truth.*——] Malice oppresses honesty; a *true man*, in old language, is an *honest man*. We now call the jury *good men and true*.

JOHNSON.

327. *I take this* offer *then*;——] Perhaps we should read

read—*his*, i. e. Bassanio's, who offers *twice* the sum, &c. STEEVENS.

334. *Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.*] This judgment is related by *Gracian*, the celebrated Spanish jesuit, in his *Hero*, with a reflexion at the conclusion of it: "—Compite con la del Salomon la promtitud de aquel gran Turco. Pretendia un Judio cortar una onca de carne a un Christiano, pena sobre usura. Insista en ello con igul terqueria a su Principe que perfidia a su Dios. Mando el gran Juez traer pesa, y cuchillo; cominole el deguello si cortava mas ni menos. *Y fue dar agudo corte a la lid, y al mundo milagro del ingenio.*" El Heroe de Lorenzo Græcian. Primor. 3.

Gregorio Leti, in his *Life of Sixtus V.* has a similar story. The papacy of Sixtus began in 1583. He died Aug. 29, 1590. The reader will find an extract from *Farnworth's Translation*, at the conclusion of the notes on this play. STEEVENS.

393. *I am content*, &c.] Anthonio tells the duke, that if he will abate the fine for the state's half, he (Anthonio) will be contented to take the other, *in trust*, after Shylock's death, to render it to his daughter's husband. That is, it was, during Shylock's life, to remain *at interest* in Anthonio's hands, and Shylock was to enjoy the produce of it.

REMARKS.

412. ——*thou should'st have had* ten *more*,] *i. e.* a jury of *twelve* men, to condemn thee to be hanged.

THEOBALD.

So,

So, in *The Devil is an Ass*, by Ben Jonson:

"————I will leave you

"To your godfathers in law. Let *twelve men* work." STEEVENS.

415. ——*grace of pardon*;] Thus the old copies: the modern editors read, less harshly, but without authority,——*your grace's pardon*. The same kind of expression occurs in Othello.—*I humbly do beseech you* of *your pardon*.

In the notes to *As You Like It*, and *The Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I have given repeated instances of this *phraseology*. STEEVENS.

Your *grace's pardon*, was found in a copy of no authority, the 4to. of 1637. MALONE.

476. —*upon mere* advice,] *i. e.* more *reflection*. STEEVENS.

Thus, in *Comus*:

"Advice with scrupulous head." HENLEY.

ACT V.

Line 1. —*IN such a night as this*,] The several speeches in the *Merchant of Venice*, act v. sc. 1. beginning with these words, &c. are imitated in the old Comedy of *Wily Beguiled*: which, though not ascertaining the exact date of that play, prove it to have been written after Shakspere's.

"In such a night did Paris win his love.
"*Lelia.* In such a night, Æneas prov'd unkind.
"*Sophos.* In such a night, did Troilus court his dear.
"*Lelia.* In such a night, fair Phillis was betray'd."
Orig. of the Drama, Vol. III. p. 365.
WHALLEY.

4. *Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan wall,*] This image is from Chaucer's *Troilus and Cresseide*, 5 B. 666 and 1142:

"Upon the *wallis* fast eke would he walke,
"And on the Grekis host he would yse, &c.
"The daie goth fast, and after that came eve
"And yet came not to Troïlus Cresseide,
"He lokith forth, by hedge, by tre, by greve,
"And ferre his heade *ovir the walle* he leide."
&c.

Again, *ibid.*:

"And up and doune by west and eke by est,
"*Upon the wallis* made he many a went."
STEEVENS

11. *In such a night,*
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand] This passage contains a small instance, out of many that might be brought, to prove that Shakspere was no reader of the classicks. STEEVENS.

15. *In such a night*, &c.] So, Gower, speaking of Medea:

"Thus it befell upon a night,
"Whann there was nought but sterre light,
"She

" She was vanished right as hir list,
" That no wight but herself wist :
" And that was at midnight tide,
" The world was still on every side," &c.

Confessio Amantis, 1554.

STEEVENS.

36. ——*She doth stray about*
By holy crosses,——] So, in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton :*

" But there are *Crosses*, wife ; here's one in Waltham,
" Another at the Abbey, and the third
" At Ceston ; and 'tis ominous to pass
" Any of these without a Pater-noster."

And this is a reason assigned for the delay of a wedding.

STEEVENS.

55. ——*sweet soul.*] These two words should certainly be taken from the end of *Launcelot*'s speech, and placed at the beginning of the following speech of *Lorenzo :*

Sweet soul, let's in, &c.

Mr. Pope, I see, has corrected this blunder of the old edition, but he has changed *soul* into *love*, without any necessity. TYRWHITT.

Sweet *soul* was not an alteration made by Mr. Pope, but an arbitrary and unauthorized reading introduced by the editor of the second folio. Mr. Rowe first regulated these speeches in the manner recommended by Mr. Tyrwhitt, which appears to me to be clearly right. MALONE.

66. ——*with* pattens *of bright gold*;] *Pattens* is the reading of the first folio, and *patents* of the quarto. *Patterns* is printed first in the folio, 1632. JOHNSON.

One of the quartos 1600 reads *pattens*, the other *patents*. STEEVENS.

We should read *patines*, from *patina*, LAT. A *patine* is the small flat dish or plate used with the chalice, in the administration of the eucharist. In the time of popery, and probably in the following age, it was commonly made of gold. MALONE.

70. *Such harmony is in immortal* souls;] Part of the difficulty of this passage was occasioned by a wrong punctuation. There should be a full point after *cherubims*, and no note of admiration after *souls*. "*Such harmony*," &c. is not an exclamation arising from the foregoing line—"*So great* is the harmony!" but a simile or illustration:——"of the *same kind* is the harmony."——The whole runs thus:

There is not one of the heavenly orbs but sings as it moves, still quiring to the Cherubims. Similar to the harmony they make, is that of immortal souls; (or in other words) *each of us have as perfect a harmony in our souls as the harmony of the spheres, insomuch as we have the quality of being moved by sweet sounds* (as he expresses it afterwards); *but our gross terrestrial part, which environs us, deadens the sound, and prevents our hearing it.*——It, I apprehend, refers to *harmony*, and not to *souls*.

Perhaps Shakspere, when he wrote this passage, had Sir Philip Sydney's elegant *Defence of Poesie* in his thoughts:—"But if you be born so neare the *dull-making*

making cataract of *Nilus*, that you cannot *heare* the *planet-like musick* of poetrie, if you have so earth-creeping a mind that it cannot lift itself up to look to the skie of poetrie," &c.

It may be objected that this *internal* harmony cannot be heard—but Shakspere is not always exact in his language—he confounds it with that external and artificial harmony which is capable of being heard.

My interpretation is strengthened by the following passage in the second part of *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602, by Marston, who likewise supposes the harmony of *immortal souls* to be *of the same kind* with that of the spheres:

"———*Heaven's tones*
"Strike not such harmony to *immortal souls*,
"As your accordance sweets my breast withall."

MALONE.

The old reading *in* immortal souls is certainly right, and the whole line may be well explained by Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, B. V. "Touching musical harmony whether by instrument or by voice, it being but high and low in sounds in a due proportionable disposition, such notwithstanding is the force thereof, and so pleasing effects it hath in that very part of man which is most divine, that some have been thereby induced to think that the soul itself, by nature, is or hath in it harmony. For this quotation I am indebted to Dr. Farmer. STEEVENS.

Thus, in *Comus*:

"Can

"Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
"Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
"Sure *something holy lodges in that breast,*
"And with these raptures moves the vocal air
"To testify HIS *hidden residence.*" HENLEY.

72. —*close* it *in*—] Is the reading of the quarto. STEEVENS.

73. ———*wake Diana with a hymn*;] Diana is the moon, who is in the next scene represented as sleeping. JOHNSON.

75. *And* draw *her* home *with* musick.] Shakspere was, I believe, here thinking of the custom of accompanying the last waggon-load, at the end of harvest, with rustick musick. He again alludes to this yet common practice, in *As You Like It.* MALONE.

90. *The man that hath no musick in himself,*
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,]
The thought here is extremely fine: as if the being affected with musick was the only harmony between the *internal* [*musick in himself*] and the *external musick* [*concord of sweet sounds*], which were mutually affected like unison strings. This whole speech could not choose but please an English audience, whose great passion, as well then as now, was *love of musick. Jam verò video naturam* (says Erasmus in praise of folly) *ut singulis nationibus, ac pene civitatibus, communem quandam insevisse Philautiam: atque hinc fieri, ut* Britanni *præter alia Formam,* musicam, *& lautas Mensas propriè sibi vindicent.* WARBURTON.

This

This passage, which is neither pregnant with physical or moral truth, nor poetically beautiful in an eminent degree, has constantly enjoyed the good fortune to be repeated by those whose inhospitable memories would have refused to admit or retain any other sentiment or description of the same author, however exalted or just. The truth is, that it furnishes the vacant fiddler with something to say in defence of his profession, and supplies the coxcomb in musick, with an invective against such as do not pretend to discover all the various powers of language in articulate sounds.

Our ancient statutes have often received their best comment by means of reference to the particular occasion on which they were framed. Dr. Warburton has therefore properly accounted for Shakspere's seeming partiality to this amusement. He might have added, that Peacham requires of his Gentleman ONLY to be able "to sing his part sure, and at first sight, and withal to play the same on a viol or lute."

Let not, however, this capricious sentiment of Shakspere descend to posterity, unattended by the opinion of the late lord Chesterfield on the same subject. In his 148th letter to his son, who was then at Venice, his lordship, after having enumerated musick among the *illiberal* pleasures, adds——"if you love musick, hear it; go to operas, concerts, and pay fiddlers to play to you; but I must insist upon your neither piping nor fiddling yourself. It puts a gentleman in a very frivolous contemptible light; brings him

him into a great deal of bad company, and takes up a great deal of time, which might be much better employed. Few things would mortify me more, than to see you bearing a part in a concert, with a fiddle under your chin, or a pipe in your mouth." Again, Letter 133, "A taste of sculpture and painting is, in my mind, as becoming as a taste of fiddling and piping is unbecoming a man of fashion. The former is connected with history and poetry, the latter with nothing that I know of, but *bad company*." Again, ——"Painting and sculpture are very justly called liberal arts; a lively and strong imagination, together with a just observation, being absolutely necessary to excel in either; which, in my opinion, is by no means the case of musick, though called a liberal art, and now in Italy placed above the other two; a proof of the decline of that country." STEEVENS.

106. ——*without respect*;] Not absolutely good, but relatively good as it is modified by circumstances. JOHNSON.

132. *A* tucket—] *Toccata*, Ital. a flourish on a trumpet. STEEVENS.

140. *Let me give light*, &c.] There is scarcely any word with which Shakspere so much delights to trifle as with *light*, in its various significations. JOHNSON.

Most of the old dramatick writers are guilty of the same quibble. So, Marston in his *Insatiate Countess*, 1613:

"By

"By this bright *light* that is deriv'd from thee—
"So, sir, you make me a very *light* creature."

Again, Middleton, in *A Mad World my Masters*, 1608:

"—*more* lights—I call'd for *light:* here come in two are *light* enough for a whole house."

Again, in *Springes for Woodcocks*, a collection of epigrams, 1606:

"Lais of *lighter* metal is compos'd
"Than hath her *lightness* till of late disclos'd;
"For *lighting* where she *light* acceptance feels,
"Her fingers there prove *lighter* than her heels."

STEEVENS.

152. ——*this* breathing *courtesy*.] *Breathing* for *verbal*.—So, in *Timon of Athens*, a senator replies to Alcibiades, who had made a long speech:

"You *breathe* in vain."

Again, in *Hamlet:*

"Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
"The youth you *breathe of*, guilty." MALONE.

160. ——*like cutler's poetry*;] Knives as Sir John Hawkins observes, were formerly inscribed by means of *aqua fortis* with short sentences in distich. Mr. Reed has cited from Decker's *Satiro-mastix* the following pertinent passage: "You shall swear by Phœbus, who is your poet's good lord and master, that hereafter you will not hire Horace to give you *poesies* for rings, or handkerchers, or *knives*, which you understand not." * * *.

167. —*have been* respective,——] *Respective* has the same meaning as *respectful*. See *K. John*, act i.

STEEVENS.

172. ———*a youth,*
A kind of boy; a little scrubbed *boy,*
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk;
A prating boy, &c.] It is certain, from the words of the context and the tenor of the story, that Gratiano does not here speak contemptuously of the judge's clerk, who was no other than Nerissa disguised in man's clothes. He only means to describe the person and appearance of this supposed youth, which he does by insinuating what seemed to be the precise time of his age: he represents him as having the look of a young stripling, of a boy beginning to advance towards puberty. I am therefore of opinion, that the poet wrote:

———a little *stubbed* boy.

In many counties it is a common provincialism, to call young birds not yet fledged *stubbed young ones.* But, what is more to our purpose, the author of *The History and Antiquities of Glastonbury,* printed by Hearne, an antiquarian, and a plain unaffected writer, says, that "Saunders must be a *stubbed boy,* if not a man at the dissolution of abbeys," &c. edit. 1722, Pref. Signat. n. 2. It therefore seems to have been a common expression for *stripling,* the very idea which the speaker means to convey. If the emendation be just here, we should also correct Nerissa's speech which follows:

For that same *stubbed* boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this did lie with me last night.

WARTON.

I believe

I believe *scrubbed* and *stubbed* have a like meaning, and signify *stunted* or *shrub-like*. So, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* "——but such will never prove fair trees, but *shrubs* only." STEEVENS.

215. —*retain*—] The old copies concur in reading *contain*. JOHNSON.

217. *What man——wanted the modesty*
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?] This is a very licentious expression. The sense is, *What man could have so little modesty*, or *wanted modesty so much*, as to urge the demand of a thing kept on account in some sort religious. JOHNSON.

Thus Calphurnia says to Julius Cæsar:

"Cæsar, I never stood on *ceremonies*."

STEEVENS.

260. ——*swear by your* double *self*,] *Double* is here used for—*full of duplicity*. MALONE.

265. ——*for his wealth*;] For his advantage; to obtain his happiness. *Wealth* was, at that time, the term opposite to *adversity*, or *calamity*. JOHNSON.

THE ancient ballad, on which the greater part of this play is probably founded, has been mentioned in *Observations on the Faery Queen*, l. 129. Shakspere's track of reading may be traced in the common books and popular stories of the times, from which he manifestly derived most of his plots. Historical songs, then very fashionable, often suggested and recommended a subject. Many of his incidental allusions also relate to pieces of this kind, which are now grown valuable on this account only, and would otherwise have been deservedly forgotten. A ballad is still remaining on the subject of *Romeo and Juliet*, which by the date appears to be much older than Shakspere's time. It is remarkable, that all the particulars in which that play differs from the story in Bandello, are found in this ballad. But it may be said, that he has copied this story as it stands in Paynter's *Pallace of Pleasure*, 1567, where there is the same variation of circumstances. This, however, shews us that Shakspere did not first alter the original story for the worse, and is at least a presumptive proof that he never saw the Italian.

Shakspere alludes to the tale of *King Cophetua and the Beggar*, more than once. This was a ballad; the oldest copy of which, that I have seen, is in *A Crown Garland of Golden Roses gathered out of England's Royall Garden*, 1612. The collector of this miscellany was

was Richard Johnson, who compiled, from various romances, *The Seven Champions*. This story of Cophetua was in high vogue, as appears from our author's manner of introducing it in *Love's Labour Lost*, act iv. sc. 1. As likewise from John Marston's Satires, called the *Scourge of Villanie*, printed 1598, viz.

"Go buy some ballad of the fairy king,
"And of the BEGGAR WENCH *some rogie thing*."
Sign. B. II.

The first stanza of the old ballad begins thus:

"I read that once in Africa
"A prince that there did reign,
"Who had to name Cophetua,
"*As poets they do feign*, &c.

The prince, or king, falls in love with a female beggar, whom he sees accidentally from the windows of his palace, and afterwards marries her. [Sign. D. 4.] The song, cited at length by the learned Dr. Grey, on this subject, is evidently spurious, and much more modern than Shakspere's time. The name Cophetua is not once mentioned in it.

However, I suspect, there is some more genuine copy than that of 1612, which I before mentioned. But this point may be, perhaps, adjusted by an ingenious inquirer into our old English literature, who is now publishing a curious collection of ancient ballads, which will illustrate many passages in Shakspere.

I doubt not but he received the hint of writing

King

King Lear from a ballad on that subject. But in most of his historical plays, he copies Hall, Holinshed, and Stowe, the reigning historians of that age. And although these Chronicles were then universally known and read, he did not scruple to transcribe their materials with the most circumstantial minuteness. For this he could not escape an oblique stroke of satire from his envious friend, Ben Jonson, in the comedy called, *The Devil's an Ass*, act ii. sc. 4.

"*Fitz-dot.* Thomas of Woodstock, I'm sure, was duke: and he was made away at Calice, as duke Humfrey was at Bury. And Richard the Third, you know what end he came to.

"*Meer-er.* By my faith you're cunning in the Chronicle.

"*Fitz-dot.* No, I confess, I ha't from the play-books, and think they're more authentick."

In Antony Wood's collection of ballads, in the Ashmolean Museum, I find one with the following title: "*The lamentable and tragical Historie of Titus Andronicus, with the fall of his five and twenty sons in the wars with the Goths*; with the murder of his daughter Lavinia, by the empress's two sons, through the means of a bloody Moor, taken by the sword of Titus in the war: his revenge upon their cruel and inhumane acte."

"You noble mindes and famous martiall wights."

The use which Shakspere might make of this piece, is obvious. WARTON.

The

The two principal incidents of this play are to be found separately in a collection of odd stories, which were very popular, at least five hundred years ago, under the title of *Gesta Romanorum*. The first, *Of the bond*, is in ch. xlviii. of the copy, which I choose to refer to, as the completest of any which I have yet seen. MS. Harl. n. 2270. A knight there borrows money of a merchant, upon condition of forfeiting *all his flesh* for non-payment. When the penalty is exacted before the judge; *the knight's mistress*, disguised, *in forma viri & vestimentis pretiosis induta*, comes into court, and, by permission of the judge, endeavours to mollify the merchant. She first offers him his money, and then the double of it, &c. to all which his answer is—*Conventionem meam volo habere*.—Puella, cum hoc audisset, ait coram omnibus, Domine, mi judex, da rectum judicium super his quæ vobis dixerit. —Vos scitis quod miles nunquam se obligabat ad aliud per literam nisi quod mercator habeat potestatem carnes ab ossibus scindere, *sine sanguinis effusione*, de quo nihil erat prolocutum. Statim mittat manum in eum; si vero sanguinem effuderit, *Rex contra eum actionem habet*. Mercator, cum hoc audisset, ait; date mihi pecuniam, & omnem actionem ei remitto. Ait puella, Amen dico tibi, nullum denarium habebis—pone ergo manum in eum, ita ut sanguinem non effundas. Mercator vera videns se confusum abscessit; & sic vita militis salvata est, & nullum denarium dedit.——

The other incident, *of the caskets*, is in ch. xcix. of the same collection. A king of Apulia sends his daughter

daughter to be married to the son of an emperor of Rome. After some adventures (which are nothing to the present purpose), she is brought before the emperor; who says to her, "Puella, propter amorem filii mei multa adversa sustinuisti. Tamen, si digna fueris ut uxor ejus sis, cito probabo. Et fecit fieri tria vasa. PRIMUM fuit *de auro purissimo* & lapidibus pretiosis interius ex omni parte, & plenum *ossibus mortuorum*; & exterius erat subscriptio: *Qui me elegerit, in me inveniet quod meruit.* SECUNDUM vas erat *de argento puro*, & gemmis pretiosis, plenum *terra*; et exterius erat subscriptio: *Qui me elegerit, in me inveniet quod natura appetit.* TERTIUM vas *de plumbo*, plenum *lapidibus pretiosis interius & gemmis nobilissimis*; & exterius erat subscriptio talis: *Qui me elegerit, in me inveniet quod deus disposuit.* Ista tria ostendit puellæ, & dixit, si unum ex istis elegeris in quo commodum & proficuum est filium meum, habebis. Si vero elegeris quod nec tibi aliis est commodum, ipsum non habebis." The young lady, after mature consideration of the vessels and their inscriptions, chooses the *leaden*, which being opened, and found to be full of gold and precious stones, the emperor says: "Bona puella, bene elegisti——ideo filium meum habebis."

From this abstract of these two stories, I think it appears sufficiently plain that they are the *remote* originals of the two incidents in this play. That *of the caskets* Shakspere might take from the English *Gesta Romanorum*, as Dr. Farmer has observed; and that *of the bond* might come to him from the *Pecorone*; but,

but, upon the whole, I am rather inclined to suspect, that he has followed some hitherto unknown novellist, who had saved him the trouble of working up the two stories into one. TYRWHITT.

Of the incident of the *bond*, no English original has hitherto been pointed out. I find, however, the following in *The Orator: handling a hundred severall Discourses, in form of Declamations: some of the Arguments being drawne from Titus Livius and other ancient Writers, the rest of the author's own invention: Part of which are of Matters happened in our age.——Written in French by Alexander Silvayn, and Englished* by *L. P.* [*i.e.* Lazarus Pilot] *London, printed by Adam Islip*, 1596.—— (This book is not mentioned by Ames.) See p. 401.

DECLAMATION 95.

"*Of a Jew, who would for his Debt have a Pound of the Flesh of a Christian.*

"A Jew, unto whom a Christian merchant ought nine hundred crownes, would have summoned him for the same in Turkie: the merchant, because he would not be discredited, promised to pay the said summe within the tearme of three months, and if he paid it not, he was bound to give him a pound of flesh of his bodie. The tearme being past some fifteene daies, the Jew refused to take his money, and demaunded the pound of flesh: the ordinarie judge of that place appointed him to cut a just pound of the

Christian's flesh, and if he cut either more or lesse, then his own head should be smitten off: the Jew appealed from this sentence, unto the chief judge, saying:

"Impossible is it to breake the credit of trafficke amongst men without great detriment to the commonwealth: wherefore no man ought to bind himselfe unto such covenants which hee cannot or will not accomplish, for by that means should no man feare to be deceaved, and credit being maintained, every man might be assured of his owne; but since deceit hath taken place, never wonder if obligations are made more rigorous and strict then they were wont, seeing that although the bonds are made never so strong, yet can no man be very certaine that he shall not be a loser. It seemeth at the first sight that it is a thing no less strange than cruel, to bind a man to pay a pound of the flesh of his bodie, for want of money; surely, in that it is a thing not usuall it appeareth to be somewhat the more admirable, but there are divers others that are more cruell, which because they are in use seeme nothing terrible at all: as to binde all the bodie unto a most lothsome prison, or unto an intollerable slaverie, where not only the whole bodie, but also all the senses and spirits are tormented, the which is commonly practised, not only betwixt those which are either in sect or nation contrary, but also even amongst those that are of one sect and nation; yea amongst Christians it hath been seene that the son hath imprisoned the father for monie. Likewise in the

the Roman commonwealth, so famous for lawes and armes, it was lawful for debt to imprison, beat, and afflict with torment the free citizens: how manie of them (do you thinke) would have thought themselves happie, if for a small debt they might have been excused with the paiment of a pounde of their flesh? who ought then to marvile if a Jew requireth so small a thing of a Christian, to discharge him of a good round summe? A man may aske why I would not rather take silver of this man, then his flesh: I might alleage many reasons, for I might say that none but my selfe can tell what the breach of his promise hath cost me, and what I have thereby paied for want of money unto my creditors, of that which I have lost in my credit: for the miserie of those men which esteem their reputation, is so great, that oftentimes they had rather endure any thing secretlie, then to have their discredit blazed abroad, because they would not be both shamed and harmed. Neverthelesse, I doe freely confesse, that I had rather lose a pound of my flesh then my credit should be in any sort cracked: I might also say that I have need of this flesh to cure a friend of mine of a certaine maladie, which is otherwise incurable, or that I would have it to terrifie thereby the Christians for ever abusing the Jews once more hereafter: but I will onlie say, that by his obligation he oweth it me. It is lawfull to kill a souldier if he come unto the warres but an houre too late, and also to hang a theefe though he steal never so little: is it then such a great matter

to cause such a one to pay a pound of his flesh, that hath broken his promise manie times, or that putteth another in danger to lose both credit and reputation, yea and it may be life, and al for griefe? were it not better for him to lose that I demand then his soule, alreadie bound by his faith? Neither am I to take that which he oweth me, but he is to deliever it to me: and especiallie because no man knoweth better than he where the same may be spared to the least hurt of his person, for I might take it in such place as hee might thereby happen to lose his life: whatte matter were it then if I should cut off his privie members, supposing that the same would altogether weigh a just pound? or els his head, should I be suffered to cut it off, although it were with the danger of mine own life? I believe it should not; because there were as little reason therein as there could be in the amends whereunto I should be bound: or els if I would cut off his nose, his lips, his ears, and pull out his eies, to make them altogether a pound, should I be suffered? surely I think not, because the obligation dooth not specifie that I ought either to choose, cut, or take the same, but that he ought to give me a pound of his flesh. Of every thing that is sold, he which delivereth the same is to make weight, and he which receiveth, taketh heed that it be just: seeing then that neither the obligation, custome, nor law doth bind me to cut, or weigh, much lesse unto the above-mentioned satisfaction, I refuse it all, and require

that

that the same which is due should be delivered unto me."

The Christian's Answere.

"It is no strange matter to here those dispute of equitie which are themselves most unjust; and such as have no faith at all, desirous that others should observe the same inviolable, the which were yet the more tolerable, if such men would be contented with reasonable things, or at the least not altogether unreasonable: but what reason is there that one man should unto his own prejudice desire the hurt of another? as this Jew is content to lose nine hundred crownes to have a pound of my flesh, whereby is manifestely seene the ancient and cruel hate which he beareth not only unto Christians, but unto all others which are not of his sect: yea, even unto the Turkes, who overkindly doe suffer such vermine to dwell amongst them, seeing that this presumptuous wretch dare not onely doubt, but appeale from the judgement of a good and just judge, and afterwards he would by sophisticall reasons prove that his abhomination is equitie: trulie I confesse that I have suffered fifteen daies of the tearme to passe; yet who can tell whether he or I is the cause thereof; as for me, I think that by secret meanes he has caused the monie to be delaied, which from sundry places ought to have come unto me before the tearm which I promised unto him; otherwise, I would never have been so rash as to bind myselfe so strictly; but although he were not the cause of

of the fault, is it therefore said, that he ought to be so imprudent as to go about to prove it no strange matter that he should be willing to be paied with man's flesh, which is a thing more natural for tigres, than men, the which also was never heard of? but this divil in shape of man, seeing me oppressed with necessitie, propoundeth this cursed obligation unto me. Whereas he alleageth the Romaines for an example, why doth he not as well tell on how for that crueltie in afflicting debtors over grievously, the commonwealth was almost overthrowne, and that shortly after it was forbidden to imprison men any more for debt. To breake promise is, when a man sweareth or promiseth a thing, the which he hath no desire to performe, which yet upon an extreame necessity is somewhat excusable: as for me I have promised, and accomplished my promise, yet not so soon as I would; and although I knew the danger wherein I was to satisfie the crueltie of this mischievous man with the price of my flesh and blood, yet did I not flie away, but submitted myselfe unto the discretion of the judge who hath justly repressed his beastliness. Wherein then have I satisfied my promise, is it in that I would not (like him) disobey the judgment of the judge? Behold I will present a part of my bodie unto him, that he may paie himselfe, according to the contents of the judgement; where is then my promise broken? But it is no marvaile if this race be so obstinat and cruell against us, for they do it of set purpose to offend our God whom they have crucified: and where-

fore?

fore? Because he was holie, as he is yet so reputed of this worthy Turkish nation: but what shall I say? Their own Bible is full of their rebellion against God, against their priests, judges, and leaders. What did not the very patriarchs themselves, from whom they have their beginning? They sold their brother, and had not it been for one amongst them, they had slaine him for verie envie. How many adulteries and abhominations were committed amongst them? How many murthers? Absalom did he not cause his brother to be murdered? Did he not persecute his father? Is it not for their iniquitie that God hath dispersed them, without leaving them one onlie foot of ground? If then, when they had newlie received their law from God, when they saw his wonderous works with their eies, and had yet their judges amongst them, they were so wicked, what may one hope of them now, when they have neither faith nor law, but their rapines and usuries? and that they believe they do a charitable work, when they do some great wrong unto one that is not a Jew? It may please you then, most righteous judge, to consider all these circumstances, having pittie of him who doth wholly submit himselfe unto your just clemencie: hoping thereby to be delivered from this monster's crueltie."

FARMER.

The "History of *Gesta Romanorum*," is advertised at the end of the comedy of *Mucidorus*, 1668, to be sold, among other books, on Saffron-Hill, in Wine-Street,

Street, near Hatton-Garden. Again, in *Giles Goose-cap*, 1606:

"Then for your ladyship's quips and quick jests, why *Gesta Romanorum* were nothing to them." Again, in Chapman's *May-Day*, 1611:

"——one that has read Marcus Aurelius, *Gesta Romanorum*, the Mirror of Magistrates," &c.

Gregorio Leti, in his *Life of Sixtus V.* tranflated by Ellis Farneworth, 1754, has likewise this kind of story.

It was currently reported in Rome that Drake had taken and plundered St. Domingo, in Hispaniola, and carried off an immense booty: this account came in a private letter to *Paul Secchi*, a very considerable merchant in the city, who had large concerns in those parts which he had insured. Upon the receiving this news he sent for the insurer Samson Ceneda, a Jew, and acquainted him with it. The Jew, whose interest it was to have such a report thought false, gave many reasons why it could not possibly be true; and at last worked himself up into such a passion, that he said, "I'll lay you a pound of my flesh that it is a lie."

Secchi, who was of a fiery hot temper, replied, "If you like it, I'll lay you a thousand crowns against a pound of your flesh that it is true." The Jew accepted the wager, and articles were immediately executed between them, the substance of which was, "That if Secchi won, he should himself cut the flesh with a sharp knife from whatever part of the Jew's body

body he pleased. Unfortunately for the Jew, the truth of the account was soon after confirmed, by other advices from the West-Indies, which threw him almost into distraction; especially when he was informed that Secchi had solemnly sworn he would compel him to the exact literal performance of his contract, and was determined to cut a pound of flesh from that part of his body which it is not necessary to mention. Upon this he went to the governor of Rome, and begged he would interpose in the affair, and use his authority to prevail with Secchi to accept of a thousand pistoles as an equivalent for the pound of flesh: but the governor not daring to take upon him to determine a case of so uncommon a nature, made a report of it to the pope, who sent for them both, and having heard the articles read, and informed himself perfectly of the whole affair from their own mouths, said, "When contracts are made, it is just they should be fulfilled, as we intend this shall. Take a knife, therefore, Secchi, and cut a pound of flesh from any part you please of the Jew's body. We would advise you, however, to be very careful; for if you cut but a scruple or grain more or less than your due, you shall certainly be hanged. Go, and bring hither a knife, and a pair of scales, and let it be done in our presence."

The merchant at these words, began to tremble like an aspin-leaf, and throwing himself at his holiness's feet, with tears in his eyes protested, "It was far from his thoughts to insist upon the performance

of the contract." And being asked by the pope what he demanded? answered, "Nothing, holy father, but your benediction, and that the articles may be torn in pieces." Then turning to the Jew, he asked him, "What he had to say, and whether he was content?" The Jew answered, "That he thought himself extremely happy to come off at so easy a rate, and that he was perfectly content." "But we are not content," replied Sixtus, "nor is there sufficient satisfaction made to our laws. We desire to know what authority you have to lay such wagers? The subjects of princes are the property of the state, and have no right to dispose of their bodies, nor any part of them, without the express consent of their sovereigns."

They were both immediately sent to prison, and the governor ordered to proceed against them with the utmost severity of the law, that others might be deterred by their example from laying any more such wagers.——[The governor interceding for them, and proposing a fine of a thousand crowns each, Sixtus ordered him to condemn them both to death, the Jew for selling his life, by consenting to have a pound of flesh cut from his body, which he said was direct suicide; and the merchant for premeditated murder, in making a contract with the other that he knew must be the occasion of his death.]

As Secchi was of a very good family, having many great friends and relations, and the Jew one of the most leading men in the synagogue, they both had recourse to petitions. Strong application was made

to

to cardinal Montalto, to intercede with his holiness at least to spare their lives. Sixtus, who did not really design to put them to death, but to deter others from such practices, at last consented to change the sentence, into that of the galleys, with liberty to buy off that too, by paying each of them two thousand crowns, to be applied to the use of the hospital which he had lately founded, before they were released.

Life of Sixtus V. Fol. B. VII. p. 293, &c.

STEEVENS.

THE END.

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